

# The Missouri Overweight and Obesity **Observer**

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A compilation of the latest news relating to overweight and obesity from around the state, nation and world.

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**NOTE:** Some web pages may have expired since news pages are updated so frequently.

## Dietary restrictions for kids ineffective, counterproductive

Well-meaning parents who forbid their children from eating certain foods to avoid having them become overweight might need to reconsider their strategy. A new study finds young girls whose mothers are especially restrictive when it comes to eating are prone to engage in excessive snacking. Girls are more subject to the societal pressures to be thin and pretty, the authors suggest. The ineffectiveness of food restrictions is no surprise to experts. Such restrictions often promote insatiable cravings for food, said Marilyn K. Tanner, pediatric dietitian and study coordinator at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis and member of the Missouri Council on the Prevention and Management of Overweight and Obesity. She said the phenomenon is not unique to children but can also be seen in adults.

*For full story, go to:* [http://abcnews.go.com/sections/living/SciTech/Food\\_Laws030724.html](http://abcnews.go.com/sections/living/SciTech/Food_Laws030724.html)

## Cancer group urges end to 20-year eating binge

The American Institute for Cancer Research has jumped on the bandwagon urging Americans to be aware of eating super-sized servings. Overweight and obesity have been linked to cancer as well as other chronic diseases. Approximately 14 percent of cancer deaths in men and 20 percent of cancer deaths in women are related to excess weight, according to a study published in the April 24 *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

*For full story, go to:* <http://www.aicr.org/presscorner/pubsearchdetail.lasso?index=1646>

## FDA to require trans fat content labels on most foods and dietary supplements

Food labels that list the amount of unhealthy trans fatty acids, or trans fat, will now be required by the U.S. food and Drug Administration to give consumers better information when choosing their foods.

The new requirement by FDA will mean that manufacturers of most conventional foods and some dietary supplements will have to list in the Nutrition Facts panel the trans fat content of the product, in addition to the information about its overall fat content and saturated fat content.

The additional information will give consumers a more complete picture of fat content in foods allowing them to choose foods low in trans fat, saturated fat and cholesterol, all of which are associated with an increased risk of heart disease. Reducing the intake of trans fat and saturated fats is recommended by the Federal Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

*For full story, go to:* <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2003pres/20030709.html>

## 'Obesity is a family illness' says health professional

Children may learn to become obese when they are born into an environment that fosters it, says principle investigator and director of the Obesity Prevention Center at St. Louis University School of Public Health. "Obesity is a family illness," says Debra Haire-Joshu, Ph.D. "Children typically are not born obese. They learn to become obese in an environment that encourages it. If parents are eating poorly, that's what they're providing their children." Armed with these conclu-



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sions, the St. Louis researchers are teaming up with Parents As Teachers, a national free educational program for parents of children from birth to age 3, to show parents how to eat healthier so that they can provide better models for their children.

*For full story, go to:* [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2003-06/slu-ia061203.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2003-06/slu-ia061203.php)

## The paradox of hunger and obesity in America

Hunger and food insecurity have been called America's "hidden crisis." At the same time, and apparently paradoxically, obesity has been declared an epidemic. Both obesity and hunger (and, more broadly, food insecurity) are serious public health problems, sometimes coexisting in the same families and the same individuals. Their existence sounds contradictory, but those with insufficient resources to purchase adequate food can still be overweight, for reasons that researchers now are beginning to understand. Policy makers and the public need to grasp this apparent paradox if the nation is to grapple with these parallel threats to the well-being of many children and adults, and avoid potentially damaging policy prescriptions arising from a mistaken belief that food insecurity and obesity cannot coexist.

*For full story, go to:* <http://www.frac.org/pdf/hungerandobesity.pdf>

## Americans clean their plates, no matter how full

Most Americans clean their plates, no matter how full those plates are, according to a recent survey. The findings, released by the American Institute for Cancer Research, add to the debate over how much restaurants and fast-food outlets are contributing to the epidemic of obesity in the United States and elsewhere. The survey found that 69 percent of those polled finish their meals most or all of the time, even when the portions being served are huge.

*For full story, go to:* [http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=571&ncid=751&e=3&u=/nm/20030717/hl\\_nmhealth\\_portions\\_dc](http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=571&ncid=751&e=3&u=/nm/20030717/hl_nmhealth_portions_dc)

## Philadelphia schools ban sale of sodas in lunchrooms

In addition to banning the sale of sodas in the schools, a Philadelphia school district has also taken steps to improve the nutritional value of its school lunch program and the snacks it sells, according to a recent report in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Citing concerns about students' poor nutrition and a growing obesity problem, the district chief executive officer said he planned to ban the sale of soda in schools when the district finalized a beverage deal.

*For full story, go to:* <http://www.philly.com/mld/inquirer/news/local/6268825.htm>

## New 'Energy Calculator' helps kids balance diet, exercise

Although counting calories is generally not advised or necessary for healthy children, developing an understanding of energy needs could help children keep their food choices in perspective and balanced with physical activity.

"We hope that children and parents will use the CNRC's (Children's Nutrition Research Center at Baylor College of Medicine) new Children's Energy Needs Calculator at [http://www.kidsnutrition.org/consumer/nyc/vol1\\_03/energy\\_calculator.htm#](http://www.kidsnutrition.org/consumer/nyc/vol1_03/energy_calculator.htm#) to see the impact that physical activity has on a child's daily energy needs," said CNRC registered dietitian Joan Clark. Clark, an instructor at Baylor, developed the calculator, which is based on new energy recommendations released by the Institutes of Medicine in 2002.

According to Clark, an average 9-year-old boy who is physically active for an hour a day burns about 2000 calories per day. However, if the child is a "couch potato," his daily energy needs go down about 250 calories, to 1750 per day.

*For full story, go to:* [http://www.kidsnutrition.org/consumer/nyc/vol1\\_03/energy\\_calculator.htm](http://www.kidsnutrition.org/consumer/nyc/vol1_03/energy_calculator.htm)